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UNION SEMINARY ADDRESSES

UNION SEMINARY ADDRESSES

BY

THOMAS S. HASTINGS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1904

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TROW DIRECTORY
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY
NEW YORK

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PREFACE

It never would have occurred to me to publish this volume had not several of my honored colleagues urged me to do so. Even then I hesitated, and probably would have given up altogether the idea of publication, but for the action of the Faculty, which was taken in my absence, and was communicated to me in the following note:

"Union Theological Seminary,
"New York, February 5, 1902.

"To the Rev. Dr. Thomas S. Hastings.

"Dear Dr. Hastings:

"At a meeting of the Faculty of this Seminary, held this date, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

'*Resolved*, That Dr. Hastings be earnestly requested to prepare for publication, if he can do so without too heavily taxing his time and strength, a volume of addresses, containing among others particularly those given before the students during his term of office as President of the Seminary.'

"I have the honor to transmit the action of the Faculty, and to subscribe myself,

"Yours very truly,

"(Signed) Chas. R. Gillett,
"*Secretary of the Faculty.*"

In my affectionate regard and respect for my colleagues, with whom I have worked so long and so pleasantly, I could not disregard their request.

Many of the addresses to which the Faculty refers were never written, and of these I have no memoranda sufficient to enable me to reproduce them.

In this collection I have ventured to place at the beginning my Inaugural Address, which was published when delivered, but which had of necessity only a very small circulation. It is included here as a fitting prelude of what follows. Some of these addresses were given at the opening of the Seminary year; and some of them at the "Monthly Devotional Services, under the Direction of the Faculty," when it devolved upon me to lead, and some of them are farewell words to successive classes graduated during my Presidency.

To the more formal addresses I have ventured to add some of the short talks at the morning chapel services. These were always extemporaneous; but, on my return from the chapel, I wrote out what I had said, in order that I might refer to the memoranda, and so avoid repetition.

I have gathered what I could, and present the results in this volume, hoping only that they may prove of interest to some of my old friends, and to some of my former and present students.

THOMAS S. HASTINGS.

Union Theological Seminary.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

SEPTEMBER 22, 1881

THE MINISTER AND HIS WORK

THE chair of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology is between learning and life—to reconcile and harmonize the two. The tendency of learning is to isolate, and to disqualify for practical sympathy with common life. In the curriculum, both of the college and of the seminary, there is always the danger that the scholastic will absorb the human, so that in proportion to the gain in knowledge will be the loss in wisdom and in practical facility and force. Never was the demand so great as now for the highest order of learning in the Christian ministry, and therefore never was the danger so great as now that the manhood of the students will not be levelled with their learning. There may be as much of real avarice in the getting of knowledge as there ever was in the getting of money; and the blight and curse will be the same in the one case as in the other. It is *greed*, not gold, which kills souls. It matters little what is the object of greed, whether it be wealth, honor, or knowledge, it is the selfishness in it which makes it corrosive and deadly. The more some men know, the less they are; they bend and stagger under the load they carry, and cannot move or walk with manly freedom and spirit. Of one of the non-jurists Lord Macaulay wrote: "He had perused innumerable volumes in various languages,

and had indeed acquired more learning than his slender faculties were able to bear. The small intellectual spark which he possessed was put out by the fuel." Knowledge should equip and not burden. It depends on the *motive* with which it is sought, and on the *use* to which it is put, whether scholarship shall be to the student power or paralysis. There cannot be too much knowledge—the more the better; but there may be too little life.

To level and assimilate the two, learning and life—that is the difficulty; yet that is the necessity. The heart and the brain are peers; and the throb of the one must keep time with that of the other, only—the throb of the heart must be warmer and stronger than that of the brain.

To guide and stimulate the students in the acquisition of knowledge, is the work of my honored colleagues. To instruct in the art of bringing that knowledge to bear in its full force on human life, is the work to which I have been called. It is a great work, and difficult, and one in which the teacher must, first of all, lose himself, that he may find the individuality of each student, and aid in securing to each separately the development of his best possibilities. The students must be separated as well as classified, that the teacher may know and cultivate in each that which to him is natural.

But what is it to be natural? The ready and common answer is: "It is to be yourself." But that necessitates another question, "What is it to be yourself?" This brings us directly to my theme: "*Self*

—Its Meanings, and its Relations to the Character and to the Work of the Christian Minister."

1. *Self—What are its meanings?* Let us go back to the question just now asked, "What is it to be yourself?" The word is ambiguous, and is often used without intelligent discrimination. There are two selves—the one hereditary and initial, the other ideal and ultimate. "Be yourself"—that must refer to the ideal self; otherwise it enjoins inertia and forbids progress. When Bourdaloue was probing the conscience of Louis XIV, applying to him the words of St. Paul, and intending to paraphrase them, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do"—"I find two men in me"—the King interrupted the great preacher with the memorable exclamation, "Ah! these two men—I know them well." Bourdaloue answered: "It is already something to *know* them, Sire; but it is not enough—one of the two must perish." Now between these two selves—the one primary, the other ultimate—are all the aspiration and study, all the toil and battle of true and noble living. We start *from* and *with* the one self, and move toward the other—*from*, because escape from self is the only salvation; *with*, because in the primary self is, in part at least, the capital upon which the business of life is conducted; in it are the materials and implements and weapons for the work and the warfare. There is often confusion of mind in thinking and speaking of self, because this distinction is not made. *To be natural*—that may mean either to be your primary or your ultimate self. If the former, then it implies that original

depravity shall have full sway: all the black drops in the blood shall be dominant; it means that the original self, with its inherited and acquired tendencies, shall refuse culture, reject discipline, and defy rules. It is assumed that art and nature are antagonists, but really they are coadjutors. Art confronts nature disordered and distracted by the deep inworking of sin. In nature, thus deranged, art seeks to find the key-note whereto the lost harmonies may be readjusted. Discipline and rules aim at the natural, not at the artificial. But is the natural the *real?* or is it the ideal? Our theology answers the question, and answers it peremptorily: The natural is the ideal, the ultimate; it is not that which we have and are, but that which we pray and hope to have and to become. Individuality is sacred, but then it includes the possibilities, and not merely the actualities. No two natures are alike, and yet all have a common origin and a common end. Made in the image of God—between that beginning and the end stands God made in the image of man, requiring of each believing soul, and promising to each, a fuller image of God, and a more complete likeness to God, as the only true consummation of redeemed life. There are two ways of looking at the Christ, one of which is full of discouragement, and the other full of lofty cheer and noblest hope. Castillo was long ranked as the finest of Spanish artists. In his later years, when he first saw a Murillo, he studied the marvellous canvas long and earnestly, and then exclaimed, "Castillo is no more!" That was the despair of egotism. When Correggio first looked upon a Raphael, thrilled with a sense

of the high possibilities of his art, he exclaimed, "And I, too, am an artist!" So you may look at the Christ, the superlative Man, and be overwhelmed with despair; or you may see in Him not only what you *ought* to be, but rather what you *shall* be, and with sublime hope and with deepest meaning you may exclaim, "And I, too, am a man!" Not merely the imperative in the Christ, but also the *promissive*, our manhood needs to feel. And this points us forward, and calls us from the natural egotism of introspection to that outreaching of the soul, which finds hope and inspiration in the Great Object of our faith.

I am already touching the boundaries of the second part of my subject. The needed discriminations have been made with reference to the meanings of *self*, so that the word will not be misunderstood in our farther use of it; and now we are to consider:

2. *The relations of self, thus understood, to the character of the Christian minister.*

Personal character is the basis of power, influence, and success in the ministry. Quintilian gives this as Cato's significant definition: "An orator is a good man, skilled in speaking." Goodness is the vital thing; it is the necessary foundation of sacred eloquence. Spiritual power ultimates in character. What you are, limits what you say. An old mediæval proverb puts this tersely: "If a man's life is lightning, his words will be thunders." * Piety varies in quality quite as much as in degree. It may be hard, cold, formal, and dark, or it may be bright, warm,

* "*Cujus vita fulgor, verba tonitrua.*"

fresh, full of hope and joy, and so of all elements that are most persuasive and magnetic. If a man walk in the shadow of himself, it is because he walks with his back to the sun. If the life is mainly a communion with self, then it must be meagre and dark, for the true light is not in self, but in Christ. The vision of the soul must not turn in upon itself to study the size and quality of its own "spiritual retina"; vision is not for introspection. Carlyle says, "Gaze steadily into your candle-light, and the sun himself will be invisible." All the glory of power, of inspiration, of promise is, not in self, but in the Christ. The primal self is that one burden which no man can carry; it must be utterly surrendered, or the soul be crushed with the awful load. But if self be surrendered for the Christ to carry, then the unburdened spirit will have liberty and elasticity, peace and power in the Lord. The piety of the ministry needs this elimination of self, and this full substitution of the Christ, in order to be of that fine and high quality which will be eloquent and persuasive beyond any mere words which human lips can utter. We need manly piety in the ministry, free from the cringing and the cant which come mainly of the intrusiveness of self; not such piety, to borrow another's phrase, as is "always sending one to his mirror, that he may examine his moral toilet." We need such manhood—brave, broad, rich, strong, and tender—as can be had only by high fellowship with the one perfect manhoood. In the true minister self is out of sight, and God and man fill the horizon; God and man—God as motive, man as object.

We are told of Phidias that "he carved like one who had seen Zeus!" And we know that the one secret of the sublimity of Moses's manhood is, that "He endured as seeing Him Who is invisible." It is noticeable that in all relations where the divine and the human come together, the tendency of the former times was, so to bring the divine to the front as almost to hide the human; while the reaction of our times shows a tendency so to bring the human to the front as to hide the divine. This is seen not only in the treatment the Bible and the Christ have received, but also in the way in which the Christian ministry has been regarded. A just balance between the divine and the human is that which is needed. The human writers may be recognized in the Holy Scriptures without making them less holy—without imperilling their supreme authority as the infallible Word of God. The full and beautiful humanity in Jesus Christ may be owned and felt without lessening our deep sense of His true Godhood. So in the ministry, we may and should maintain its divine authority; and yet the minister should be most human in his attitude toward his fellow-men. This fine tribute, which Lowell paid to his friend Agassiz, one could wish might be fairly earned by every minister:

He was so human! whether strong or weak,
  Far from his kind he neither sank nor soared,
  But sate an equal guest at every board;
No beggar ever felt him condescend;
  No prince presume; for still himself he bare
  At manhood's simple level, and where'er
He met a stranger, there he left a friend.

The human and the divine should so interblend in the ministerial character as to make it in the highest sense Christly. We must understand that self-culture means not only self-discipline, but also and equally self-denial; not only self-development, but also and equally self-conquest. Pagan and classic wisdom culminated in the familiar Delphic motto, *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, but Christian wisdom started and continues and conquers with this motto, *Γνῶθι Χριστόν*. The difference between the two is radical and vital, and has to do with the very foundations of Christian character, determining alike its quality and its degree. Against this saying of Juvenal, "*E coelo descendit, Γνῶθι σεαυτόν*," Coleridge recorded his protest in these striking lines:

> *Γνῶθι σεαυτόν*—and is this the prime
> And heaven-sprung adage of the olden time?
> Say, canst thou make thyself? Learn first that trade,
> Haply thou may'st know what thyself hast made.
> What hast thou, man, that thou dar'st call thine own?
> What is there in thee, man, that can be known?
> Dark fluxion, all unfixable by thought,
> A phantom dim of past and future wrought,
> Vain sister of the worm, life, death, soul, clod,
> Ignore thyself and strive to know thy God.

If here it be objected that true humility, that radical virtue, can be cultivated only by self-knowledge, the answer is easy. Humility comes not by introspection but by that aspiration in which self is lost to sight and "God is all and in all." In Christian biography those are the best and humblest souls that have most looked up, and been most absorbed in God. The knowledge

of self is the knowledge of the sinful and the fragmentary; the knowledge of God is the knowledge of the perfect and the ultimate. Model, motive, inspiration, and power are all in God, and not in self. Character must root itself in the infinite; its growth cannot be self-fed or self-sustained. Self-lifting is out of the question as much spiritually as it is physically; we must lay hold on that which is outside and above us, if we would rise higher. Goethe says, "Die and become; for so long as this is not accomplished, thou art but a troubled guest upon an earth of gloom." St. Paul puts the matter in the most forcible way: "Nevertheless I live, yet *not* I, but Christ liveth in me." Egotism, self-seeking, self-consciousness, and all subtle shades of selfism are fatal to ministerial power. Above all men, the Christian minister needs that high and fine quality of character which comes only to the brain and heart which are freed of self and filled and fascinated with Christ.

3. *What has been said of the character of the Christian minister, leads us on to speak of the relations of my theme to the ministerial work.*

The Christian minister—there are these elements in his composition: the man, the student, the preacher, the pastor. I have spoken of the man in treating of the character of the minister; but there is one preliminary thing that belongs here. Enthusiasm—not merely emotional and fitful, but deep, principled enthusiasm—is necessary to all good and great work; and no one needs it more than the minister, as student, preacher, and pastor. One must hide himself

in Christ to find and feel the true enthusiasm for humanity; you cannot find it by inlook, nor by outlook, but only by uplook. It comes not by the pathos of the appeal of man's deep want and woe; it comes not by the cold process of logic, or by the slow, calm method of thought; no, no, this high enthusiasm comes only as you stand by the cross of Jesus Christ; for of all summits Calvary is the highest; it is the most commanding and the most inspiring view-point this side of heaven. There you see the two infinities, divine love and human need. There God is realized, and there man is realized; God in His holiness, His condescension and compassion—man in his awful guilt and peril. No humanitarian sentimentalism is thus induced, but a settled principled enthusiasm. And such enthusiasm will never burn out; but it will consume all selfish ambitions, and give perpetual light and warmth and power. The soul thus kindled cannot hide behind ramparts nor cower in trenches; it will go forth free, brave, and glad, and find that in Christian living the true defence is aggression. It has been remarked concerning the life of Jesus that "He was never guarding Himself, but alway invading the lives of others with His holiness. The force with which His character and love flowed out upon the world kept back more strongly than any granite wall of prudent caution could have done, the world from pressing in on Him. His life was like an open stream that keeps the sea from flowing into it by the eager force with which it flows down into the sea." * That covers a great deal. Thus the personality

* Sermons, Phillips Brooks, p. 182.

of the minister can be a power only as it is not projected, but sunk and hidden by the earnestness with which he sees God and man.

But the minister is not only a man, he is also a student; he must be this, or he is nothing. The minister who is indolent, unstudious, and unscholarly, dishonors God, discredits the ministry, and destroys himself. But with what purpose and spirit should the minister study? The knowledge we need is not all in books, in men, or in things; but it is primarily in Christ Jesus, the incarnate Truth. St. Paul had behind him all the treasures of classic literature; behind him were the academy and the porch; behind him were Socrates and Plato and Aristotle; while he himself was rich in the spoils of the splendid schools of Tarsus; and yet, hear him: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord." More to me, in depth of significance, than all his noble scholarship, is the fact that when Hermann Witsius entered upon his professorship in Leyden in 1698, the theme of his inaugural was *"De Theologo Modesto."* The preacher must be a student, not to satisfy a scholarly appetite, not to gain for the sake of gain, not to secure for himself respect and admiration, not to serve the Church, the school, the system, but to honor God in the salvation and service of men. The Bible must have the first place among the preacher's books. It must be not only harvested and gleaned on its surface, but mined in its depths. The student must be saturated with its spirit, equipped with its tools, and armed with its weapons. He must find in God's Word *the word*

for the people, that he may come before them, and go among them so rich in divine treasures that he may be always giving to the hungry immortality around him which is ever crying out for the bread of heaven. In many ways and most absolutely, does the level of the study determine the level of the pulpit. As water will not rise higher than its source, so is it with the spiritual power of the preacher; its source, under God, is in his study; and that must be not a library only, but also a sanctuary, with its pulpit, its altar, and its Shekinah always invisible, but always real and dominant. In the minister, both as a man and as a student, there must be transparent simplicity and purity, unmixed with earthliness and selfism, so that the light which is from above, may penetrate the depths of his soul, to be reflected to the minds and hearts of men. Mr. Ruskin,* by an elaborate and convincing argument, shows that on clear water near the eye there are and can be no shadows—no shadows of cloud, mountain, or forest, but only reflections. Upon turbid and muddy waters, like those of the Rhine, because there is so much earthy matter in them, there are indeed shadows; but never upon waters that are clear. How true that is of men! There are no shadows on childlike and transparent souls, they only reflect the glories of heaven; but turbid souls, full of self and earthliness—they, like muddy waters, are always darkly shadowed.

Now let us follow the student to the pulpit and think of him as a preacher. Even before he begins to speak, unconscious influence exhales from his look, his atti-

* Arrows of the Chase, p. 191 *seq.*

tude, his whole manner. At once he conciliates and attracts, or provokes and antagonizes. If he show in his look a modest respect for his hearers, and a becoming sense of the solemnity and responsibility of his position, the hearts of the people will open toward him; but any sign of self-confidence or of self-consciousness will break the spell. The people will hear all and bear anything when they see that the preacher has not come before them to dogmatize or to display himself, but is intent only on their good. I have tried to show that the personal character of the preacher should have this two-foldness—God so realized, and man so realized, that self is lost in their absorbing claims and interests. I need not farther urge that the preacher should come to the pulpit with a sermon carefully and studiously prepared, the best fruit of his prayers and studies. I shall presume that enough has been said with reference to the matter of discourse to admit of my speaking only of the manner. It is due to Christ, in whose name we preach; it is due to the truth; it is due to the people that the Word should lose nothing, but gain as much as possible by the manner of its presentation. It is said of the times of the Renaissance that "Falsehood in a Ciceronian dialect had no opposers, truth in *patois* no listeners." * It is saddening to the last degree to see so many in the ministry who, though excellent and scholarly men, fail utterly to command the attention of the people, simply because, though they know what to say, they do not know how to say it; they have absolutely no culture of voice or manner. The common

* Stones of Venice, iii, 61.

neglect of such culture is marvellous and unaccountable. Now and then, but very rarely, one hears preaching which is nothing but rhetoric and elocution. It is needless to say that such preaching is beneath contempt. Nothing but rhetoric and elocution! It reminds me of this withering sarcasm with which Thackeray disposes of George IV: "I try and take him to pieces, and find silk stockings, padding, stays, a coat with frogs, and a fur collar, a star and blue ribbon, a pocket-handkerchief prodigiously scented, one of Truefitt's nutty brown wigs reeking with oil, a set of teeth, a huge, black stock, underwaistcoats, more underwaistcoats, and then —nothing." *

But on that point I need say no more in this presence and in this scholarly atmosphere.

In general, as it has been well and often declared, the preacher's manner should always be such that the hearers will not think of it or of him, but only of the truth. Yet in order to attain this, which is certainly the perfection of manner, there must be the most careful and judicious culture. Mr. Emerson says: "The poet Saadi tells us that a person with a disagreeable voice was reading the Koran aloud, when a holy man, passing by, asked what was his monthly stipend. He answered, 'Nothing at all.' 'But, then, why do you take so much trouble?' He replied, 'I read for the sake of God.' The other rejoined, 'For God's sake do not read, for if you read the Koran in this manner you will destroy the splendors of Islamism!'" † How much

* The Four Georges, p. 90.
† Letters and Social Aims, p. 108.

have the Bible and the hymn-book and Christian truth suffered from men who neither know how to read or speak! But when, in the same connection, Mr. Emerson says: "In the Church I call him only a good reader who can read sense and poetry into any hymn in the hymn-book," we may well question the fairness of such a test under the existing condition of our hymnology. How much there is in the voice that betrays, like the countenance, the character, and the degree of refinement and culture! Socrates said to a youth distinguished for personal beauty, "Speak, that I may see thee!" There are voices that grate and grind and rasp the sensibilities; and there are those that court and caress the ear, and are sweet as Apollo's lute. There may be smiles or tears in a voice. One need not go far to detect what Hawthorne calls "The chronic croak, the voice dyed black." * Fine speaking is the broadest and finest of the fine arts; it is architecture, music, statuary, and painting, all in one. It is architecture, for it has construction, form, proportion, symmetry, perspective; it is music that thrills and lifts souls like a noble symphony; it is statuary, for it has pose, attitude, gesture, which the cold marble might well envy; it is painting, for it pictures with every variety of color, and every delicacy of touch, what pencil and canvas can never at their best portray. Surely this broadest and finest of the fine arts deserves much of that patient study and laborious devotion which are so readily and generously conceded to all the other arts. I know well the common objection which has been so

* House of the Seven Gables, p. 146.

decisive, and has wrought such wide-spread mischief in the past. We are told that all culture which has respect to manner in the pulpit, will make only artificial speakers; and the preacher above all things should be himself, and should be natural. The utter folly of that objection will at once be apparent, if you will here recall and apply the distinctions made in the early part of this address. "To be yourself," in the sense of this objection, is to be certainly and entirely wrong, *i.e.*, as already indicated, it is to be just what your native depravity may make you; "to be yourself" in the true and higher sense, as I tried to show, is to work and to struggle from your primal self toward your ideal self. So also to "be natural" you must reach a high and distant goal. It is very true that, at the first, rules produce constraint and artificiality, but with labor and patience they settle into principles and form habits, and so are merged into what seem like intuitions. Rules are rounds of the ladder by which one climbs; when he has reached the height, he leaves the ladder, but keeps the elevation. Rules are masters until by obedience of them they are converted into servants. And that transformation is accomplished only when you have so wrought them into your own nature that you conform to them unconsciously. And then, and so, you are at length *yourself* and have become at last *natural.* The old Latin saying is here abundantly true, *"Summa ars artem superare."* *

A minister is to be not only a preacher, but a pastor. In order to this he should never be a place-seeker. The

* This is better than the kindred saying: "*Ars est celare artem.*"

world is always full of open doors for honest and self-sacrificing workers; doors which Christ opens for such workers, and which no man can shut. There is a quaint old proverb that is pertinent and suggestive here, "A stone that is fit for the wall will not be left in the roadway." The self-seeker may find a place, but he cannot fill or keep it. Let the place find you, and you will both fit and fill it. There is wisdom in this saying of Confucius, "I am not concerned that I have no place; I am concerned how I may fit myself for one. I am not concerned that I am not known; I seek to be worthy to be known." The pastoral relation is one of the most delicate, beautiful, and delightful, as it is one of the most difficult, laborious, and responsible among all the relations of life. It is fruitful only of pain and bitter disappointment to the self-seeker; but to him who, in self-abnegation, seeks Christ and souls, it is fruitful of the purest joys and of the finest and highest rewards. How true in all these relations we have been considering is the Master's word, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

In conclusion I cannot resist the temptation to repeat the words of the gifted Robertson, in one of his last published sermons: "The minister of Christ is but a herald to prepare His coming; and then, and only then, has he done his work when he has endeavored to detach trust and admiration from himself and to fasten them upon Jesus Christ; and when he feels that he is becoming every day less and less necessary to those whom he has taught, because he has imparted to them all he

knows and led them to the everlasting fountain which shall never be exhausted. The very spirit of the Christian ministry consists in these words, 'He must increase, but I must decrease'; I fulfil my course; it will soon be done; I point to Christ." *

Suffer me a few words of personal allusion. To be associated with such honored men as my colleagues, so widely known, revered, and loved; to occupy a chair which the rare and symmetrical, the gifted and graceful spirit of Dr. William Adams dignified and adorned, is a responsibility before which one might well shrink. If it did not seem to be the call of God that has summoned me hither, I would dare to be afraid, and to refuse the high task which is before me. God help me to seek not myself, but His glory in the good of those He may aid me to teach.

* The Human Race, and other Sermons, p. 118.

A SYMPOSIAC AT UNION SEMINARY

CELEBRATING THE FOUR HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE BIRTH OF MARTIN LUTHER

NOVEMBER 19, 1883

Each of the seven professors was limited to eight minutes

LUTHER AS A PREACHER

In studying Luther as a preacher, the first thing that strikes one is the humility with which he shrank from the work of the pulpit. He said to his superior who was urging him to preach: "No, no; it is no slight thing to speak before men in the place of God." Yielding reluctantly at last, he said to Staupitz: "Ah! doctor, by doing this you deprive me of life. I shall not be able to hold out three months." It was only the natural shrinking of a great soul from a great responsibility. The mighty men are the modest men.

He began to preach in an old wooden chapel, 30 feet by 20. For a beginning it was large enough for a large man; it was too small for a small man. The new preacher "could not be hid." The full man had a full church. After this hesitant beginning, almost every day for weeks together Luther was in the pulpit. During Lent he often preached twice, and sometimes thrice a day, besides keeping up his daily academical lectures. He condemned a certain minister as luxurious and lazy, because on a salary of about $200 a year he preached only twice a week.

Luther's *physical* qualifications for preaching were exceptional. He had an iron constitution; strength, force and grace. He had a clear, ringing, flexible voice, which could be stirring as a bugle, or soothing as

a lute. He had such eyes as magnetize and master men. He could look *through* his eyes and *with* them; they were deep beyond fathoming; they were quick, sharp, piercing; they could flame with passionate fierceness, flash with lofty inspiration, or flow with tenderest tears.

Luther's *intellectual* qualifications for preaching were remarkable for their symmetry and comprehensiveness. It would not be difficult to name one and another preacher who excelled him in one and another respect; but it would be impossible to name one who in all respects was his equal. Comparing him with other preachers, Melanchthon bears this testimony: "One is an interpreter, one a logician, another an orator, affluent and beautiful in speech, but Luther is all in all." If you distrust Melanchthon's enthusiasm for his friend, hear the later and calmer verdict of Mr. Froude, who says of Luther: "In mother wit, in elasticity, in force and imaginative power, he was as able a man as ever lived." Like all great preachers Luther was mighty in the Scriptures. He found in the Bible his food and his drink; his life and his light; his tools and his weapons. He was always a student, but always with his eye upon duty as well as upon truth, upon man as well as upon God.

Of Luther's *spiritual* qualifications for preaching it would be difficult to say enough. He was greatly affected by the spirituality and fervor of the sermons of Tauler. His religious experiences were extraordinary in depth and in vividness. He lived under the spell of the infinities and the eternities; he heard the

inaudible; he saw the invisible; he handled the intangible; and according to the old proverb, "he turned men's ears into eyes." When charged with harshness and severity he said: "I can easily cut a willow or a hazel wand with my trencher-knife, but for a hard oak a man must use the axe." He was master of different methods; he knew how to fence and how to strike hard blows; he could wield either a Damascus blade, or a battle-axe. Heine says: "He was not only the tongue, but the sword of his time. Sometimes he was wild as the storm that uproots the oak, and then again he was gentle as the zephyr that dallies with the violet." He knew his times. He did not preach classical sermons, mediæval sermons, or nineteenth-century sermons; but such as were precisely suited to his own day. With keen, longing eyes he looked into the present, and aimed his sermons, not at graves, nor at clouds, but at living men. Behind and in every sermon was the man, full of faith, full of power, full of tenderness and sympathy; and his great true heart pulsed in every word he uttered. He knew well how to choose his language. He could utter words that would toll on and on, and thrill the world with their music like a new evangel. He could speak words that went like bullets swift and straight to their mark; or such as burst like shells amid his foes. Hot, hissing words he had for those who merited his scorn; or gentle, drawing, soothing words for those who needed persuading or comforting.

In this great preacher, as in all who fill the pulpit and lift the people, self was subordinated and Christ was supreme. He said: "My true disciples do not be-

lieve in Luther but in Jesus Christ." At the gates of Wittenberg, starting on foot on his perilous journey to Augsburg, when the crowd of his friends (assembled to bid him farewell) shouted: "Luther forever," he replied: "Christ forever!" Again he said: "Those are my best friends who think the worst of me. I cannot allow myself to be praised either by you or by any man, for all praise of man is vain, and only that which comes from God is true." In his preaching he was to the last degree simple. He said: "I want the common people and children and servants to understand me." And again he said: "Cursed are all preachers that in church aim at high or hard things." He was as diligent as he was versatile. The prodigious task of translating the Scriptures he accomplished mainly by economizing fragments of time. To a friend, who wondered how he had achieved so great a work, his explanation was this paraphrase of Apelles's familiar motto: *"Nulla dies sine versu!"* He knew that religion must *sing* as well as work its way among men, and so he gave to the nation that had been for centuries silent and songless in its worship hymns and tunes which were seized with avidity, and which are still full of life and power.

It need hardly be said that Luther was a bold, brave preacher. He was afraid of neither man nor devil. When the gallant Ulrich von Hütten offered military aid for his protection, Luther replied: "By the Word the world has been conquered; by the Word the Church has been saved; by the Word, too, she will be restored. I do not despise your offers; but I will not lean upon

anyone but Christ." Pope, cardinal, and emperor were to him only men. He would smite hypocrisy squarely in the face, whether crowned or uncrowned. Well might Carlyle say of him: "His was the bravest heart then living."

I conclude with Luther's favorite homiletical rule: "Open the mouth boldly; open the mouth widely; *have done quickly.*"

THE ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE SEMINARY YEAR

SEPTEMBER 25, 1890

HOW DOES GOD CALL HIS MINISTERS?

In trying to answer this question one must at once confess his inability to make the answer complete. God's ways are not limited; His resources are infinite. We cannot determine or describe all His methods. They are too deep, too subtle, too manifold for our apprehension. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all." There is no sameness among the men to be called. No two natures are alike. Each must be treated by itself in ways adapted to its individuality. There is an endless variety in environment, in atmosphere, and in all the outward conditions of individual life. Hence it must be true in some important sense that no two men are called to the ministry in precisely the same way. Some are called in childhood, some in manhood. With some the call seems to be coincident with conversion—an immediate fruit of the Spirit's work in regeneration. With others the conviction of duty is wrought out through slow processes of thinking and reasoning, in which there are nice balancings of claims and appeals, and therefore the approach toward the conclusion is only gradual.

Sometimes a man is slowly wrapped, one strand at a time, in a web of complicated influences which hold him when he would turn to some other calling, and in all these the Holy Spirit is supreme. Conceding thus our inability to comprehend all the Spirit's means and

methods, we may yet pursue our inquiry: How does God call His ministers?

The divine call comes by the direct action of the Holy Spirit in and upon the human spirit. Of course no man is so wrought upon that he is *compelled* to enter the ministry. That would be contrary alike and equally to the divine nature and to the human. Sovereignty and liberty harmonize, and neither can or will transgress the laws of the other. But in some cases the pressure of the Spirit's influence upon the heart steadily increases until it is decisive. This pressure is mysterious, but not miraculous. It may seem like the mere natural accumulation of reasons urging one from doubt to decision. But it is more than that; it is the power of God's Spirit working according to the laws of the human spirit to accomplish His holy will. And yet through all the several stages in the progress from the first suggestion to the final conviction of duty, the mind works freely and the heart is really under no constraint. This internal working of the Holy Spirit is a blessed truth which is full of comfort to those who have the quickened spiritual sense to realize it. I trust we are all of us among those who, as Longfellow sings,*

> Believe that in all ages
> Every human heart is human,
> That in even savage bosoms
> There are longings, yearnings, strivings
> For the good they comprehend not;
> That the feeble hands and helpless,
> Groping blindly in the darkness,
> *Touch* God's *right* hand in that darkness
> And are lifted up and strengthened.

* Hiawatha.

But we must go further than our honored poet went and recognize in all these "longings, yearnings, strivings," something more than human instinct; we must see in them the working of the Divine Spirit. If we believe in this inworking *as a personal matter*, as we should believe in it, then we shall look for it and look and pray for it, and so we shall have it. In the fascinating life of F. D. Maurice this utterance of his earnest soul touched me deeply: "I ask for a demonstration of the Spirit with power to my spirit. I believe it as real a demonstration as any which comes to my intellect from the propositions in Euclid. In both cases truth unveils itself to an organ which has been formed to entertain it." * That is a strong spiritual yearning, but *it is as rational as spiritual.* For God has certainly formed us for high converse with Himself. Surely He has not fashioned us after His own image only to leave us isolated in spiritual orphanage, with no paternal voices breaking the solemn silence between the finite and the infinite, the creature and the Creator. He made us like Himself and *then made Himself like us* (save our sin) that there might be communion between Father and child. And if we do not hear His voice speaking within us, it must be because *we* are dull of hearing, and not because *He* is *slow* in speaking, for prayer is not a one-sided exercise; it is dual; it is *conversational.* The soul talks to God, and God talks to the soul. It is not a monologue; it is a divine-human dialogue. You may charge me with superstition if you will. I had infinitely rather be chargeable with *excess* of faith

* Life of F. D. Maurice, ii, 511.

than with lack of faith. You surely will not suspect such a man as James Martineau of superstition; but he, pleading strongly for this converse of the Divine Spirit with the human, says: "The wonder surely would be, if it were otherwise. How should related spirits, joined by a common creative aim, intent on whatever things are pure and good, live in presence of each other, the one the Bestower, the other the recipient of a sacred trust, and exchange no thought and give no sign of the love which subsists between them? Outwardly, there may be 'no speech nor language'; but when religious experience affirms that in the silent colloquies of the heart, *it is not all soliloquy, but that divine words also flow in and break* the loneliness, who will say that such belief is unnatural or even mystical?" * That is beautifully said. No, no, *"It is not all soliloquy"* within the temple of the human soul; the silence and the loneliness of thought are invaded by the voice of the Spirit of God, speaking as plainly at times as spake that voice in the temple of old, when God called Samuel in the darkness and the silence of the night. Like Samuel, one may at first mistake it for a human voice; but, like Samuel, the childlike spirit will come to know its Father's voice, and will answer, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

The Divine Spirit calls directly to the human spirit, and his call should be imperative. Not by startling flash, as on the Damascus road, not by audible voice, or by signs and wonders as in the olden time, but by the "still small voice," heard in the calm of honest, earnest

*A Study of Religion, ii, 48.

thought, the Spirit of God does call the spirit of man to service and to sacrifice. Not always is the call articulate in a single imperative. Sometimes the Spirit simply suggests; awakens inquiry; stimulates thought; answers objections; silences excuses. The call may be sudden, sharp, startling, decisive; or it may be so quiet and gentle that it may seem questionable, and will involve the delicate and difficult balancing of reasons and of motives. As another puts it: "There are unresounding calls, thousands of them; calls that cannot be heard at all except as you listen closely; but which, reverently heeded, may grow at last to thunders of assurance." * Years ago, up in the wilds of Vermont, a woman established public Sabbath services; she selected a young man to read printed sermons to the congregation. After a time that Christian woman said to that young man:

"You must be a Methodist minister."

"But," he said, "I am not a Christian."

"No matter," answered the woman; "you are called to be a Christian and a preacher, both in one call, as Saul was." That young man became Bishop Hedding. He was called to the ministry through the voice of an earnest Christian woman; but he was called by the Spirit of God. And this brings us to the point that the call of God to the ministry may not always be direct, or by the immediate voice of the Spirit to the soul. *It may be providential.* The one way opens and all other ways close, and so the man has seemingly no alternative; he *must* be a minister—that is sometimes the history. Yet we must all agree with Mr. Spurgeon that, because a

* Yale Lectures: N. J. Burton, p. 84.

man has failed in every other calling, this is no sign that he should try the ministry! No; the man who has not the power and the capacity for success in other callings, is not wanted in the ministry. If he is a failure everywhere else he will be a failure here. That is evident; but sometimes God in His providence shuts all doors but one against a man; leaves him no option but to enter by that one door, which opens into the blessed work of the ministry. Sometimes He finds a man who is timid and hesitant, because there are difficulties in the way; and one by one these difficulties are removed—strangely, singularly removed—until the man is without excuse; and then he yields and acknowledges that he has been called to the ministry. But, on the other hand, sometimes God puts difficulties in the way of one whom He is calling to the ministry—puts them there expressly to test his faith and earnestness, to develop his strength and courage. An easy way is never an upward way; one must struggle and pant in order to climb. Spiritual education cannot be easy. High manhood needs and covets victories. Opportunities for struggle and challenges to heroism are welcome appeals to manly men. They tell us that a river flowing through a level country of soft, alluvial soil, never makes a straight course; it is always crooked. It is so with men. Herodotus says Cyrus would not permit the Persians to leave their rough and rugged country for a better soil, saying that *soft and fertile soils make effeminate and unfertile men.* That is always true. The feeble and the cowardly may shrink in ignominious surrender to difficulties which the brave will face and master, and so gain

the more in all that is manliest and noblest. In telling the sad story of the "Rear Column" in his expedition in "Darkest Africa," the spirit of Stanley utters itself in these stirring words:

> The bigger the work, the greater the joy in doing it. That whole-hearted striving and wrestling with Difficulty; the laying hold with firm grip and level head and calm resolution of the monster, and tugging and toiling and wrestling at it, to-day, to-morrow and the next until it is done; it is the soldier's creed of forward—ever forward; it is the man's faith that for this task he was born. (Vol. i, 509.)

Such is always the tone of true manliness, of real heroism. I like these nervous lines of Browning:

> Then welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit, nor stand, but go!
> Be our joys three parts pain!
> Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
> Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

It would be a sad thing for the Church and the world if the way into the ministry were made so easy as to admit the lazy and the cowardly. In that verse which covers the childhood of Jesus, in which we read: "And Jesus *increased* (Revision, *advanced*) in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man," the verb is *προέκοπτεν*. He cut his way forward! "It is enough for the disciple that be as his Master." We must cut our way forward and make our own path through difficulties. One must have braver, higher views of life than to expect a paradise here below. One day Moham-

med reached a commanding summit overlooking an enchanting valley; he looked long and intently upon the fascinating scene, and then exclaimed: "Man can have *but one paradise*. If I enter and dwell in this below, I shall never enter and dwell in that above"; and so he turned away!

This is the lesson which I would impress. God's call to the ministry may not always be accompanied by providential interference to remove the difficulties and the obstacles which beset the way. If such hindrances be removed one may be thankful for the opened way; but if they remain they may not be regarded as an excuse for resisting the inward call.

I have said nothing of some of the more common instrumentalities which God uses to enforce His call, such as parental influence, a mother's prayers and counsels, the urgency of friends, for these are obvious at once.

Somewhat should be said about the *recognition* of this divine call. The Church, as already intimated, is to pass judgment in each case upon the question whether a man has really been divinely called to the ministry. I need say but little upon this point. There is really no one responsibility resting upon the Church more serious or more sacred than this. I beg you to remember my words when, in the future, it shall become your duty to pass judgment upon those who are candidates for the office of the ministry. In such judgment the Church should humbly recognize her dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and should seek that guidance in earnest prayer. Examinations are necessary; but they are by no means conclusive. Schol-

arship is needed, but there is a higher and a more urgent need, and that is, *spiritual power*. I believe with all my heart in elevating more and more the standard of education for the ministry; but I do not believe that mere text-book scholarship is the most important qualification for usefulness. We may put too much emphasis upon mere education. One day, that remarkable woman, the mother of the Wesleys, seeing that her son looked troubled and anxious, asked the cause. He replied with a contemptuous air, "Thomas Maxwell has turned preacher." At once she reminded her son that she had always opposed lay preaching; but she said: "Take care what you do respecting that young man; he is as surely called of God as you are." Shortly after Wesley heard Maxwell preach, and said: "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." Certainly God does call some men whom the Church and her institutions have not called. The Church cannot read the heart, and in the heart is the seat of the real preparation for this work. The Church should make the standard of scholarship higher as the average level of intelligence becomes higher; but the standard of character should likewise be raised. Character is far more rare and far more precious than talent. Herbert Spencer says:

> Ideas do not govern the world; the world is governed or overthrown by feelings to which ideas serve only as guides. The social mechanism does not rest finally upon opinions, *but almost wholly upon character*. ("Classification of the Sciences.")

We need, as we go on, not only more learned, but also better men. *Culture and character*—Christ dom-

inant in both—that should be the watchword. The Church is not competent to choose for herself; she must look for God's chosen ones.

I turn to the question of the *personal* recognition of God's call. How shall the individual know that he is truly called of God? Some things are very obvious as bearing upon this question. The man who is looking to the ministry as a mere profession certainly is not divinely called. Good Matthew Henry said: *"The ministry is the best calling, but the worst trade in the world."* If one is seeking the ministry from worldly motives; if he is taking up the cry of the olden time, "Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices, that I may eat a piece of bread," then he is not called of God. The work of the ministry is badly paid, in the low view of it, while in the higher view, it is the best paid of any work that is done on earth. I shall never forget with what a thrill of exultation I first read, as a mere boy, looking dreamily forward to the ministry, these words in the Book of Joshua (in the description of the division of the land among the tribes): "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the Lord was their inheritance, as he said unto them." If a man is not content, ay, more than content with that view of the ministry, I very much doubt whether he is called of God. Some men are too self-confident and some are too modest. Have we a right to excuse ourselves from any duty on the ground of inability? I question it very much. Moses tried to excuse himself because "he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue"; but the Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who mak-

eth the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." (Exod. iv. 10–12.) So, too, Isaiah drew back in conscious unworthiness and insufficiency; but you remember that when one of the Seraphim had touched his lips with a live coal from off the altar, the prophet answered God's call and said: "Here am I, send me." (Isa. vi. 5–8.) In like manner Jeremiah cried out: "Ah! Lord God! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child." But the Lord said unto him: "Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." St. Paul put the matter in the true light when he felt himself called to preach. He said: *"Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."* With whom did he confer? Did you ever ask and answer that question? He did not confer with the elders at Jerusalem. I think he conferred with the Lord. If he had conferred with himself, probably we should never have had his noble career to stimulate and cheer us. He was weak and had many infirmities, but he turned from these to confer with the Lord, and so he learned to say: "When I am weak then am I strong." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Self-consciousness is not conclusive; it is deceiving; it is *cowardly.* We must be conscious not of self, but of the Lord; we must confer with Him, and then He will confer with us. With quickened spiritual sense we must learn to distinguish His voice, speaking within our hearts and calling us to duty. *It is a still small voice* in which He

speaks. We must turn from the confused and confusing voices of earth; we must hush the voices of flesh and blood that we may hear what the Spirit would say unto us. If we would do this—would try to listen and learn, we would not be left to silence and doubt. If we are watchful and alert to know God's will, we shall not be left in darkness. Our poet is right: *

> All round about our feet shall shine
> A light like that the wise men saw,
> If we our loving wills incline
> To that sweet Life which is the law.

Is not the spirit of self-sacrifice one of the best tests of our spiritual loyalty? To the degree that a man is seeking self in any way, to that degree he is not in the service of the Lord. If we seek place, ease, reward, then we are seeking self and not Christ. In that interesting volume, "The Permanent Elements of Religion," the author speaks of what he calls *"the law of indirectness,"* which is this: "A man cannot perfect himself in anything *if he seek perfection directly;* for if he does so, the shadow of himself intervenes and spoils his work. Sacrifice, when it is sought as sacrifice, has a self-consciousness which mars its simplicity and spoils its moral force." And then the writer adds: "Sacrifice which knows itself as such, is not pure sacrifice. Something more is needed, some impulse of enthusiasm, some inspiration of love, to lift it out of the level of self-regardfulness." That is pertinent. We need in life the true spirit of self-sacrifice, but there is only one way in which we can get it; we must receive it from on high.

* Heartsease and Rue, James Russell Lowell.

Humbly we must bow to God's will, listen to His voice, and He will fill our hearts with His love; and that love is power—the only power that can fit us to do God's work. We must confer with God and not with self; and He can and will enable and at the same time ennoble us for His service. If we thus live the life that is hid with Christ in God, we shall find it a blessed life, cost us what it may of sacrifice and suffering. It was the fancy of the Greeks that the clay of which man was made was moistened, not with water, but with tears! Be it so; but the blessed alchemy of grace turns sorrow into joy; and so the gentle but mighty hand of *the* Sufferer wipes all tears away, that He may permit us to enter into the joy of our Lord—His own peculiar joy.

THE ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE SEMINARY YEAR

SEPTEMBER 24, 1896

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL? WHAT IS PREACHING?

WHAT is it to preach the Gospel? What and how much does this familiar question mean? A professional or technical answer is easy, but only superficial. A full and final answer no man has given, and no man can give. The difficulty inheres in both terms of the question: What is the Gospel and what is preaching? It has been said that the highest Gospel is a good biography. On the basis of that saying we claim that the New Testament is the supreme Gospel. It is the inspired biography of the greatest and best life ever lived. This is the heart of the New Testament, the life of it, the power of it. The best answer, the highest, and the simplest answer that we can give to the first part of our question is—the Gospel is Christ. A radical Unitarian said: "I spell my God with two o's, and my devil without a d"; (good and evil). That will not do; there is no Gospel in it. The abstract good will not reach and lift men. It cannot save men. We must have the personal and the living; we must have the Word made flesh dwelling with us. Christ, not as a history, not as a doctrine, and not merely as an example; but Christ as the living and ever-present and all-loving Brother—the human Christ and the divine Christ: He is the Gospel. Now, is the first part of

our question answered? Yes, if we know Christ. But do we know Him? Alas, only imperfectly. We know many things about Him, many things that He said and did, but His great heart, His wonderful mind, His ineffably lovely spirit, His tender sympathy, His compassionate love—do we know all these? Not yet. What He is, is a great deal more than what He said and did. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Yes, but that is *for* us, not *to* us. He is changing, though changeless. He is becoming more to us with every new struggle, conquest, sorrow, suffering; more to us in every sin which humbles us, in every success which exalts us. He is not the same to us that He was when we first clutched His hand to save us from sinking in the waves of despair. Since then we have walked with Him and talked with Him and tested Him in a thousand ways, and our eyes have begun to open and our hearts to enlarge; but still there is an infinity; beyond and above us, yet with us.

We may talk about the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord," but if honest with ourselves and true to Him, we must confess that we do not know Him, except in a very rudimental way. Hence in all frankness we acknowledge that the answer to the first part of our question—What is the Gospel?—is not adequate, though the best that can be given. The Gospel is Christ; this may be explanation, but it certainly is not definition. It is well to say to students for the ministry, You must preach Christ; but they do not know what or how much that means, and no man can tell them. They may preach a course of sermons

on the life of Christ, dry, detailed, and unprofitable, and think they are preaching Christ, when they are only preaching history, and history is not Gospel. Or they may preach upon the person and work of Christ, and think they are preaching Christ when they are only preaching theology, and theology is not Gospel. The people are needing something more than history and something more than theology; they need the human and divine Christ, the Gospel for common human wants—Christ, the Brother and Companion for daily living. They need preaching which can come to them only from a man who has had a broad and deep experience of what Christ is and can be to the soul, from a man who has a personal knowledge of Christ. But how is this knowledge to be obtained? It cannot be imparted by any theological seminary or by any human teacher. Is it, then, merely, or even mainly, a question of time and of protracted experience? Not necessarily. Time can do nothing for us. Like space, it is only room for development or growth. Time is not an agent. It is not even a factor. But experience can do much for us; and you will say experience requires time. That certainly is the ordinary conception, but is it true? No. Some men live more in a day than others do in years. Homer said: "The gods ever give to men their apportioned share of reason only on one day." The deepest experience is not necessarily the longest. Years are not the measure of life as to its depth, height, breadth, and affluence. Says a great writer: "The moment is the mother of the ages." Certainly we know illustrations and confirmations of

that saying in history and in biography. There are days in which life stagnates, and there are days in which life concentrates, in which its faculties are tense and its forces focalized. Or, as the poet says, there are

> Days
> In which the fibrous years have taken root
> So deeply that they quiver to their top
> Whene'er you stir the dust of such a day.

Therefore we need not be disheartened because this vital knowledge, this knowledge of the Gospel or knowledge of Christ, can be gained only by experience. Three years of theological study may not give this knowledge so fully as will three hours on Carmel, on Hermon, on Pisgah, or on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is a question, not of time, not of extended trial and suffering; it is solely a question of the openness of mind and heart toward the Light of the World. Like the sun, He will shine into and fill and flood everything that is open toward Him. We may have, we shall have, all the knowledge of Christ that we are willing to receive and are capable of receiving. New Testament exegesis can do very much for you. You should prosecute its study with scholarly earnestness and with Christian enthusiasm. You cannot be too careful or too critical in that fascinating study. But Christ is more than you can find in the New Testament. You must open your heart and mind to Him, and He will give you the divinest and most blessed revelations of Himself. So you may study theology with philosophic acuteness and with scholarly breadth. This you certainly should do.

But, alas, there is a way of killing truth with truths, of losing the whole in analyzing the parts, as of pulverizing the statue to study the atoms, or of crushing the crystal to examine its particles. If your theology be not Christocentric, it can do little for you, and if it be Christocentric, you must go to the heart of it with your heart or you will not learn Christ. He is more than can be formulated in any system. You may and you must study history as tributary to the preaching of the Gospel. But all history is either before or after Christ. He is as central here as in theology. You must read history in the light of Christ, for "all history," as Professor Flint says, "was meant to be a magnificent and conclusive apologetic for Christianity." As our own Henry B. Smith said: "Fiction may be great, but history is grand. Philosophy is noble, but history is its test. That man looks with limited or with sealed vision upon the annals of the human race who does not descry, running through all its source, underlying it and prominent above it, the workings of a spiritual kingdom whose influence in one or another form has defined the metes and bounds of history. To the rest of history it bears the same relation that the granite does to the earth's strata. It is both deepest and highest; it supports by its solidity beneath, and juts out in its sublimity in the loftiest summits."

I well remember how those words stirred me when a student in this Seminary. What is that spiritual kingdom? It is Christ, the King, swaying human lives as the sun sways stars. We have heard a great deal of the philosophy of history. I think we shall hear more

in the near future of the theology of history, and in that theology we shall see "God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." History throbs in every vein with this divine life, and you will study it to little purpose unless your heart beat rhythmic with the heart of Christ.

And as for homiletics, the same principle applies only more stringently. Homiletics can give you many rules and helpful hints, but these all presuppose a knowledge of the Gospel. No man can preach the Gospel, however well taught and trained, if he does not know the Gospel, that is, if he does not know Christ. To obtain this fundamental, this vital, this personal knowledge, is the first and the last and the constant necessity of the student's preparation for the ministry. We cannot give you this knowledge, and even God cannot give it, unless your minds and hearts are possessed by the passion for it, and so are open and receptive. God can give only as we are ready to receive. Even omnipotence has this limitation. Day by day and hour by hour you determine each for himself, how much of this knowledge you will receive. It is a terrible prerogative of human liberty, as necessary as terrible; you can "limit the Holy One of Israel." The Holy Spirit is the supreme Teacher. He would fain take of the things of Christ and show them unto you, but He cannot if you will not let Him. To borrow Lacordaire's figure: "As the ocean breaks upon a rock, and still is the ocean, so divine sovereignty breaks upon human liberty, and still is divine sovereignty."

We have come so far as this in dealing with the

question, What is it to preach the Gospel? The Gospel is Christ. He is the subject of it, the object of it, the life of it. We cannot preach the Gospel if we do not know the Gospel. We can have this personal knowledge only on the basis of personal union with Christ, and in proportion as we have divine illumination. We can have all of such illumination that we are willing to receive.

Now I trust we are ready for the second part of our question—what is it to preach the Gospel? The pulpit, the ordained preacher, the sermon—these are incidents in the preaching of the Gospel, but not all of them are essentials. Oliver Cromwell said: "What has my whole life been but a sermon of some emphasis, preached with tongue and sword, with head and heart and right hand, with soul and body and breeches pocket, not without results, one would venture to hope." On that principle all hearers should be preachers. That is ideal, but far from actual. Meanwhile we believe in an ordained ministry as a divine institution. We believe in an educated ministry with the level of education raised as steadily and at least as fast as the general level of education is raised. Teachers must know more than their scholars. But here is involved a practical danger. The traditional education may very likely suppress or warp the manhood and destroy the individuality, and then what is left cannot preach. Mr. Emerson said: "It is the best part of a man that revolts most against his being a minister. His good revolts from official goodness. I have sometimes thought that in order to be a good minister it is necessary to leave

the ministry." No; it is not necessary to leave the ministry in order to be a good minister; it is necessary only to resist the affectations, the conventional restraints, and the traditional bondage which professional education involves, and to defend one's manhood and individuality. The preacher must insist on being himself, and on speaking his own thought and feeling, in his own way. His personal experience must have honest and frank utterance if his preaching is to be fresh and effective, and not stale and unprofitable. Education may make only counterfeit and not genuine ministers. God does not want or expect us to be like one another, but only like Himself, and that leaves abundant room for the free development of individuality. A curriculum which should aim to make all students think and act and preach alike, would be procrustean and cruel, irrational and wicked. It would show a profane disregard to the divine methods in creation and in tuition. God has never made two men alike, or educated two in the same way. If, therefore, each would freely speak out of his own nature and life, then each would be original and each would command a hearing.

A Scotchman pronounced this scathing judgment upon his three successive pastors: "Our first was a man, but not a minister; our second was a minister, but not a man; and the one we have now is neither a man nor a minister!" That is a sad verdict. The Church and the world need for their preachers ministerial men and manly ministers. We need godliness and manliness combined, for the two belong together,

and can be one, as in the Incarnation. Goethe and Tennyson have expressed the same thought. The former said: "The more thou feelest thyself to be a man, the more thou resemblest the gods"; and better is the word of the late Laureate:

> For man is not as God,
> But then most godlike, being most a man.

We need in the ministry manly piety, deep, strong, tender, Christly, full of nerve, full of muscle, full of courage, full of faith, full of hope, full of magnetic power, full of joy and cheerfulness. Only such piety can preach the Gospel; and such piety, empty of self and full of Christ, can so preach that multitudes will hear and believe.

Julius Hare struck deep into this subject when he quoted these words: "In preaching, the thing of least consequence is the sermon!" Though a Professor of Homiletics, and partly because a Professor of Homiletics, I believe that is true. The sermon should in every instance be made as perfect as the preacher can make it by prayer, by study, and by intense labor. In aim, in thought, in style, and in delivery it should be high and holy as an offering to Christ and to humanity. A sermon which is the off-hand, easy effusion of passing impulse and of cheap and familiar thought, such a sermon is utterly unworthy of the name; it is a profanation of the pulpit; it is treason to Christ and to the ministry, and an insult to humanity. At the beginning of his scores Haydn always wrote, *"In nomine Domini,"* and at the end, *"Laus Deo."* Every sermon should be

worthy of such inscription; should be, as Tholuck expressed it, "A child of earth and heaven." A sermon that has cost little is worth little, and is the meanest and most impertinent production possible in all literature. In aim the sermon should be high; in thought it should be deep and affluent, fresh and vigorous, full of the divine and of the human; it should be as the choicest gold that can be mined from the depths; in style it should be simple and luminous; direct and nervous; for words may be tender and caressing, or they may be harder than fists and sharper than daggers; and in delivery it should be hot, effective, convincing. No amount of care and culture and labor in the main things or in the incidental things is too great, too costly for the production of such a sermon as an honest minister should be willing to preach. Burnt sacrifices which cost nothing neither God nor man will accept. They should be burned, but they are not sacrifices. The only light or heat some sermons can give is by burning; they cannot be preached; they should never desecrate the pulpit; they are waste paper; no matter what their text or subject, they are full of infidelity and of profanation. And yet, with this high conception of what the sermon should be, I accept, *con amore*, the saying Julius Hare quoted: "In preaching, the thing of least consequence is the sermon." What a man *is*—that conditions the value and power of what he says. Cecil said: "Men look at a man out of the pulpit to see what he is worth in it." That is true, and men have keen eyes and know the genuine from the counterfeit.

Character is the basal, the determining thing in preaching. Character—that word is deep and suggestive. It is from the Greek χαραχτήρ, which means, primarily, a graver's tool, and then what is engraved or cut into plate or stone. So character is that which has been cut into the soul, or deeply wrought there like an intaglio seal wherewith to impress other men. It is the inward spiritual condition. Reputation is extrinsic; character is intrinsic. It is the quality, the weight, the texture, and the color of the nature. It is in the whole manhood as gravity is in every particle of matter. As another says: "A true character is like an acrostic, or Alexandrian stanza; read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing." That is true. Character—it is the specific gravity of a man; it is the size of a man; it is the value of a man; it is the whole of the man; it is all he has wherewith to confront time or eternity, God or man. A great writer says: "Common souls pay with what they do; nobler souls with what they are." When the tidings of President Garfield's death were received at the office of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, St. Hilaire said: "A great misfortune has overtaken the American people. President Garfield is no more. His *virtues were needed at the White House* more than striking mental abilities. Talent, in this period of the nineteenth century, is common enough. But great moral qualities are, alas, rare, and it is they alone which give vital force to a nation." That is good testimony. The difference between a man of talent and a man of character is like that between a projectile and a planet. The man

of talent may hurl himself with swiftness and force upon an obstacle, and may prove temporarily effective. But a man of character quietly and constantly shines and sways by simply being what he is. "You need not speak to me," says an eminent writer. "I need not go where you are that you should exert magnetism on me. Be you only whole and sufficient and I shall feel you in every part of my life and fortune, and I can as easily dodge the gravitation of the globe."

Character, as already intimated, fashions to itself the whole manhood: the look, the tones of voice, the manners, for of the last—manners—it has been said, they are "the unconscious account that character gives of itself." Some of you know the story of Anselm being waylaid by robbers: his face so shone with the light of the indwelling Christ that the rough, murderous men were awed and kneeled before him. Ah, that is a light which none can resist! Why should not that light shine in every preacher's face? It would be more eloquent and persuasive than anything he could say. Little do men think how their faces record and reveal what they really are. The countenance is the dial of the mind and heart. Our thinking and our feeling have unconscious record there, a record which he who runs may read. The countenance and the sermon may not agree; then men will believe the former and distrust the latter. Thoughtful men, and even little children, search the face of the preacher and conclude as to his character before he opens his lips, and all agree with the old saying, "A false priest is the falsest of all false things." Any sign of self-consciousness; any evidence

of self-seeking; any sordidness; any ambition for place; or yearning for pay, will make the preaching of the Gospel impossible. What the true heart wants is work rather than wages—work for God and humanity. We can get on with little if only we have work. The old saying is always true, "He who wants least is most like the gods who want nothing." Common workers can be paid on earth, but he who does God's work in preaching His Gospel cannot be paid in coin of earth, but only in the affluence of heaven, out of God's exhaustless treasure. Pity, oh, pity, the men who get all their pay on earth; verily they *have* their reward; but the true preacher shall have his, and it will solace and satisfy him forever. This is the answer of our question—"What is it to preach the Gospel?"—to which our thought has been leading: to preach the Gospel you must be *a Gospel.* I say it with deepest reverence, You must be *a Christ*, in your measure. I think of Arnold's lines:

> Was Christ a man like us? Ah! let us try
> If we then, too, can be such men as He!

You must not only know, but *be* the truth; you must not merely know the Christ, but you must be one with Him so that He can be one with you. You must reach that plane where Paul was when he exclaimed, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then you cannot help preaching the Gospel. I like these words of Sailer, Bishop of Ratisbon, in the last century: "That is not a preacher who preaches an hour in the church on the

Sabbath and feast days. Preaching is a continuous act, like true piety. The true beauty of a sermon comes of interior beauty."

I have answered both branches of the question with which we started so far as I am able. The Gospel is Christ; to preach the Gospel a man must in himself be a Gospel; he must be one with Christ. There is one of St. Paul's exhortations to the Philippians which has followed me all my life more than any other; exhortation could not go deeper or higher, could not be broader or more comprehensive: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ," or, as the Revision has it, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ." That is all that need be, all that can be asked. May that exhortation be the key-note of our Seminary during the year which opens before us.

For the last fifteen years I have watched with deep interest the work of students for the ministry. It is delightful and inspiring when one sees them doing thorough and scholarly work, day by day, studying faithfully the subjects which belong to our curriculum. But there is a pathetic side to such a spectacle. How little do these earnest students know, with all their requirements, how great a thing it is, how high a thing it is, how difficult a thing it is, and how blessed a thing it is, to preach the Gospel of Christ. Who but the Divine Spirit can teach them this most vital lesson? May we all sit docile at His feet! Oh, for more simplicity and heartiness of faith for our daily living! Carlyle's tribute to the mediæval piety of Abbot Samson is worthy of our consideration: "The great, antique

heart, how like a child's in its simplicity, like a man's in its earnest solemnity and depth! Heaven lies over him wheresoever he goes or stands on the earth, making all the earth a mystic temple to him; the earth's business, all a kind of worship. Glimpses of bright creatures flash in the common sunlight; angels yet hover, doing God's messages among men; that rainbow was set in the clouds by the hand of God. Wonder, miracle, encompass the man; he lives in an element of miracle; heaven's splendor over his head, hell's darkness under his feet. A great law of duty, high as these two infinitudes, dwarfing all else, annihilating all else." May we have more of that simple and sublime faith. May we be as humble and trustful, so shall we know the Gospel and preach the Gospel. Permit me, in conclusion, to leave with you Wordsworth's lines:

> If thou be one whose heart the holy forms
> Of young imagination have kept pure,
> Stranger, henceforth be warned; and know that pride,
> Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
> Is littleness; that he who feels contempt
> For any living thing, hath faculties
> Which he has never used; that thought with him
> Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
> Is ever on himself doth look on one,
> The least of nature's works, one who might move
> The wise man to that scorn, which wisdom holds
> Unlawful ever. O be wiser, Thou!
> Instructed that true Knowledge leads to love;
> True dignity abides with him alone
> Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
> Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
> In loneliness of heart.

DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

JANUARY, 1895

Exodus iii, 14. "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

"I AM." This is the first and the largest title by which God has put Himself into human thought, language, and life. It was a great and a critical thing for the Divine Being to assume a name. What word or words could contain or express the divine, the infinite? Words are limits; God is above and beyond limits. What name could do justice to the being and character of God? And yet God must have place in human language, and in human life, and so must have a name. But what a risk it was, if I may so speak, to condescend to assume a title which would not and could not tell the whole story of what God is and does; a title which must endure misapprehension and misrepresentation as all words do while passing from lip to lip, from life to life, and from age to age. To become incarnate in human language was preliminary to becoming incarnate in human life—the one prepared the way for the other. But there is more room and more definiteness in life than in language. Hence the greater risk of assuming a name without a clear, visible, and conclusive life to match and guard it upon the same plane where that name must move and make its way. But the risk must be taken. God, as I said, must assume a name that He may have place and power in human life. If words